



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Masaki IIJIMA et al.

Title: COAL DRYING METHOD AND EQUIPMENT, METHOD FOR AGING REFORMED COAL AND AGED REFORMED COAL, AND PROCESS AND SYSTEM FOR PRODUCING REFORMED COAL

Appl. No.: 10/053,648

Filing Date: 01/24/2002

Examiner: Jerry D. Johnson

Art Unit: 1764

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Mail Stop NON-FEE AMENDMENT
Commissioner for Patents
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the restriction requirement set forth in the Office Action mailed April 1, 2004, Applicants hereby provisionally elect Group I, Claim 6, for examination, with traverse. Applicants submit that this response is timely as May 1, 2004 was a Saturday, thus making the response due date, May 3, 2004.

The Examiner has required restriction between Claim 6 (Group I), drawn to coal drying equipment; Claims 9 and 12 (Group II), drawn to aged reformed coal and a method for aging reformed coal; Claims 13-24 (Group III), drawn to a process for producing reformed coal; and Claims 25 and 26 (Group IV), drawn to a system for producing reformed coal. Restriction was required because the Examiner believed that the processes, products and apparatus as claimed are different, distinct and independent and have acquired a separate status in the art.

Applicants, of course, reserve the right to file one or more divisional applications covering the subject matter of the non-elected claims.

Receipt of an initial Office Action on the merits is awaited.

If the Examiner has any questions or comments as to this response, the undersigned may be contacted at the address and telephone number below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date May 3, 2004
FOLEY & LARDNER LLP
Customer Number: 22428
Telephone: (202) 672-5569
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

By Jayne O. Neelatt
for Stephen B. Maebius Reg. No. 34,485
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 35,264